DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 445 086 TM 031 763

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|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Fahey, Kathleen; Richter, Judith; Lesser, Lawrence; Schnelker, Diane; Omdal, Stuart |
| TITLE | Transitions in Qualitative Inquiry--Preparing for a New Century of Research. Proceedings of the Qualitative Research Seminar Series (Greeley, CO, 1998-1999). |
| PUB DATE | 2000-00-00 |
| NOTE | 47p. |
| PUB TYPE | Collected Works - Proceedings (021) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC02 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Constructivism (Learning); *Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; *Qualitative Research; Seminars |

ABSTRACT

This document presents the proceedings of five seminars and a symposium focusing on qualitative research. These events took place at the University of Northern Colorado during the 1998-99 academic year. The seminar series considered current and emerging qualitative research paradigms. The symposium, held after the series of seminars, concentrated on practical issues associated with the conduct of qualitative research. Each of the five seminars opened with an invited presentation. In the proceedings document, most of these presentations are followed by one or more commentaries on the seminar session. The following presentations are included: (1) "What Is Research? (Diane Schnelker, Christine Rogers, and Cassie Yackley); (2) "Proceedings of Qualitative Symposium: Session One" (Dale Shaw and Judy Richter); (3) "Interpretative Anthropology and Applied Research: The Case in Education" (Margaret Eisenhart); (4) "Using Photographs as Qualitative Data To Promote Organizational Change: An Interpretivist View" (James Banning); (5) "Proceedings of Qualitative Research Seminar Series Presentation" (Lawrence Lesser and Kathleen Fahey); (6) "Cooperative Inquiry: Research from an Emic Perspective" (Linda Daniel); (7) "Proceedings of Qualitative Research Seminar Series: Constructivist Paradigm" (Stuart Omdal); (8) "Proceedings of Qualitative Research Seminar Series: Constructivist Paradigm" (Kathy Cochran); (9) "The Ordinariness of Diversity: A Report of Ethnographic Fieldwork" (Michael James Higgins); (10) "Proceedings of Qualitative Research Seminar Series: Constructivist Paradigm" (Kathy Carter and Ginny Helwick); and (11) "Seminar Session 6: University of Northern Colorado Research Symposium: Summary of Activities" (Yvonna S. Lincoln). (SLD)

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# Transitions in Qualitative Inquiry – Preparing for a New Century of Research: Proceedings of 1998-1999 Qualitiative Research Seminar Series at the University of Northern Colorado

Dr. Kathleen Fahey, Dr. Judith Richter, Dr. Lawrence Lesser, Dr. Diane Schnelker, and Dr. Stuart Omdal

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L. Lesser

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## Forward

Interest in qualitative research revolutionized the field in the past 20 years. Faculty and graduate students at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC), who had been gathering to study this revolution for over 2 years, discovered that emerging research paradigms were broadening traditional thought about the nature of inquiry and challenging university research conventions. Clarifying the nature of these paradigms, it was believed, would promote and improve the quality of all research. To this end, we designed two events to heighten awareness of current and emerging qualitative research paradigms and to explore the implications of these paradigms for policies and procedures. The first of these events was a series of seminars to examine the paradigms. The second was a symposium that addressed practical issues associated with the conduct of qualitative research. Both events took place at UNC during the 1998-99 academic year. This publication presents the proceedings of these events. I take this opportunity to set the stage for the proceedings with a general overview of the events.

## Audience

Invitations were extended to faculty and graduate students interested in qualitative research at universities along the Front Range of Colorado as well as neighboring states. Attendance at the seminars and symposium ranged from 45 to 200. The open invitation presented the opportunity to build networks of qualitative researchers among representatives from other universities in the state and region.

## Seminar Series

The series "Transitions in Qualitative Inquiry: Preparing for a New Century of Research" consisted of 5 seminars addressing current and emerging qualitative research paradigms. Reading materials were made available to participants prior to each seminar to stimulate discussion. Each packet of materials contained theoretical readings that described the paradigm and examples of research based on the target paradigm. In addition, local researchers who conduct research from each of the target paradigms were invited to share their research with participants. Time was provided at most seminars for group discussions of the paradigm and/or research. The topics of each seminar are summarized below.

Dr. Diane Schnelker (Kent State University) and Cassie Yackley and Christine Rogers, doctoral students from UNC, initiated the series with an examination of "What is Research?" Dr. Margaret Eisenhart (University of Colorado, Boulder) addressed issues related to a realist view of interpretivism in her presentation "Interpretive Anthropology and Applied Research: The Case in Education?" Dr. James Banning (Colorado State University) presented a more relativist view of interpretivism in his presentation "Using Photographs as Qualitative Data to Promote Organizational Change: An Interpretivist View." Dr. Linda Daniel (Exempla-St. Joseph's Hospital, Denver) demonstrated constructivist research in her presentation "Cooperative Inquiry:

Research from an Emic Perspective." And, Dr. Michael Higgins (University of Northern Colorado) addressed issues associated with critical theory research in his presentation "The Ordinariness of Diversity and the Quest for Qualitative Understanding."

Research Day Symposium

The seminar series culminated in a symposium held in conjunction with the University of Northern Colorado's 1999 Annual Scholarship Symposium and Research Day. Dr. Yvonna Lincoln (Texas A&M University), internationally known for her scholarship in research paradigms presented the Keynote address for the event. Dr. Lincoln also facilitated various discussions with graduate students, faculty, and administrators regarding policies and practices that impact the conduct of qualitative research on university campuses.

The Proceedings

One of the goals of the coordinating committee was to stimulate dialogue about policies and procedures to support research from all current and emerging paradigms. We present the proceedings as achievement of this goal. Summaries are provided for each seminar in the series and each session of the symposium. The reading materials for each seminar are included in the respective seminars. We do not provide an analysis of themes that emerged during the events; nor do we make specific recommendations. We do hope that the proceedings raise questions about current practices and possible options for promoting quality research from a variety of approaches.

Diane Schnelker
Formerly, University of Northern Colorado
Currently, Kent State University

Acknowledgments

The seminar series and symposium could not have happened without contributions from a number of people. Coordinating the events were the following faculty and graduate students who participated in an ongoing colloquium on qualitative research.

Michelle Black, College Personnel Administration, College of Education
Dr. Florence Guido Dibrito, College Personnel Administration, College of Education
Dr. Kathleen Fahey, Communication Disorders, College of Health and Human Sciences
Dr. Lawrence Lesser, formerly, Mathematical Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences. Currently, Armstrong Atlantic State University
Dr. Sean O'Halloran, Professional Psychology, College of Education
Ginney Helwick, Division of Special Education, College of Education
Dr. Stuart Omdal, special Education, College of Education
Dr. Judith Richter, Nursing, College of Health and Human Sciences
Christine Rogers, Professional Psychology, College of Education
Dr. Diane Schnelker, formerly, Applied Statistics and Research Methods, College of Education

Dr. Dale Shaw, Applied Statistics and Research Methods, College of Education
Cassie Yackley, Professional Psychology, College of Education

Administrators of academic and non-academic units made generous financial contribution across campus.

Hank Brown, President UNC, UNC Presidential Scholarship Series
Dr. William Barnard, Sponsored Programs and Academic Research Center
Dr. Sandra Flake, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Dr. Allen Huang, Acting Dean, College of Education
Dr. Dick King, Interim Dean Graduate School
Dr. Robert Lynch, Dean, College of Business Administration
Dr. Vincent Scalia, Dean, College of Health and Human Sciences

Seminar Session #1

# What is Research?

(Remarks Presented at the Initial Seminar in the Series
"Transitions in Qualitative Inquiry:
Preparing for a New Century of Research")
University of Northern Colorado
September 18, 1998

Diane Schnelker
Kent State University

Christine Rogers
Cassie Yackley
University of Northern Colorado

1. Introductions

A. Setting the Context

1. 2 years ago a group of faculty and graduate students began meeting on a regular basis to talk about qualitative research.
2. As we examined the state of the field we discovered 3 things
   a. There are a great variety of approaches to doing qualitative research.
   b. The distinctions between these approaches go beyond method to differences in basic philosophical foundations (i.e., paradigms).
   c. Current policies and procedures in the university were not very accommodating to those alternative approaches.
3. Goal: Create an atmosphere that supports and promotes research from ALL different paradigms.
   a. We did not want to be exclusionary in any way.
   b. We did not want to debate "the best" way to do research.
   c. We accept as a given that there are multiple ways to "do" research.
4. Process of development
   a. Stimulate dialogue about the different research paradigms and how best to support them.
   b. Seminar series
      1) Tonight we will talk about the nature of research in general.
      2) Following sessions examine current and emerging paradigms in greater detail.
   c. Graduate Research Day
      1) April 9
      2) Yvonna Lincoln
      3) Policies and procedures
5. Listserve
   a. Send message to: listserv@edtech.unco.edu
   b. Message: subscribe UNCQUAL<your name>
   c. Post messages to: UNCQUAL@edtech.unco.edu

B. Introductions
1. Steering Committee Members
   a. Co-Chairs
      1) Judy Richter, Nursing
      2) Stuart Omdall, Special Education
   b. Planning
      1) Kathleen Fahey, Communication Disorders
      2) Ginny Helwick, Graduate Student, Special Education
      3) Sean O'Hallaran, Professional Psychology (Counseling Psychology
   c. Publicity
      1) Larry Lesser, Mathematics Education
      2) Michelle Black, Graduate Student, College Student Personnel Administration

d. Readings
    1) Cassie Yackley, Graduate Student, Counseling Psychology
    2) Christine Rogers, Graduate Student, Counseling Psychology
    3) Diane Schnelker
2. Distinguished guests
    a. William Barnard, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, University of Northern Colorado
    b. Margaret Eisenhart, College of Education, University of Colorado, Boulder

II. What is Research?

A. Context/background

1. We are living in an era that encourages an examination of conventions--including the conventional definition of "research."
2. Speed with which new ideas are being introduced has also created a lot of confusion.
3. In such times it is often helpful to go back to the basics to more easily trace the evolution of the new ideas.
4. "Basics" in discussions about research are the fundamental assumptions about the nature of reality and how we come to know that reality.
5. The constellation of these assumptions is what is called a "research paradigm."
    a. Guided by 3 broad questions
        1) Ontological questions: What is the nature of reality and what can be known about it?
        2) Epistemological question: What is the relationship between the inquirer and the inquired?
        3) Methodological questions: How does an inquirer go about pursuing what can be known (techniques)?
    b. Answers to these questions are interdependent. That is, the way you answer one question will put some constraints on the answers to the others. So there is logical consistency in each of the paradigms.

B. Purpose

1. Present some of the dimensions on which the answers to these questions are debated.
2. Small group discussions
    a. Possible paradigms that might be created by the relationships among various positions along the dimensions.
    b. Implications of these various paradigms for what we consider, and how we do research in institutions of higher education.

C. Dimensions

1. What is the form and nature of reality? What can be known about it?
    a. Realist v. Relativist
        1) Realist
            a. There is a real existence of something independent of individuals
    b. Straightforward descriptions of aspects of the world made true or false by facts in the world.

2) Relativist--Truth is relative to the standpoint of a judging subject (historical, cultural, social, linguistic, psychological).

c. Discovered v. Created
   1) Discovered--truth is "out there" waiting to be found.
   2) Created--truth is constructed via interactions with other people or things in the environment.

d. Nomothetic principles v. Verstehen
   1) Nomothetic principles--the purpose is to discover law like aspects of nature.
   2) Verstehen--the purpose is to develop understanding of experience.

2. What is the relationship between the knower and what can be known?
   a. Dualist objectivist v. Monistic subjectivist
      1) Dualist objectivist--observer remains detached and distant from that which is being studied. Independence between the knower and what can be known.
      2) Monistic Subjectivist--observers and observed (inquired-into) are fully engaged in such a way that findings are literally creations of the inquiry process.

3. How can the knower go about finding out what can be known?
   a. Reductionistic v. Holistic
      1) Reductionistic--Phenomena can be broken down into their elemental parts to "discover" the natural relationships between elements.
      2) Holistic--Phenomena are studied within the complex context in which they naturally occur.
   b. Interventionist v. Interpretivist
      1) Interventionist--strip away contaminating (confounding) influences to see how nature really works leading to the capability to predict and control phenomena.
      2) Interpretivist--understanding emerges or is constructed through continuing dialectic of iteration, analysis, and critique.

D. Implications
   1. Paradigmatic
      a. What are the possible positions along each of the continua? EXAMPLE: Relativism--what is the standard: historical, cultural, social, individual?
      b. What are the relationships between the various points on each continuum? EXAMPLE: Can individual relativism be "discovered" or is it "created?" What methodological position would be appropriate?
   2. What constitutes research in institutions of higher education?
      a. What constitutes a "contribution to the body of knowledge"?
      b. What will research from these various paradigms look like?
      c. How will we judge "good research?"
      d. What are the roles of committee members?
      e. What will "count" as research for dissertations and faculty review processes?
      f. What are the ethical responsibilities of the researcher, committee members, and universities? How do we meet those ethical responsibilities?

**SLIDES**

**What is Research?**

What is the form and nature of reality? What can be known about it?

Realist----------Relativist

Discovered----------Created

Nomothetic----------Verstehen

Principles

What is the relationship between the knower and what can be? known?

Dualist----------Monistic
Objectivist Subjectivist

How can the knower go about finding out what can be known?

Reductionistic----------Holistic

Interventionist----------Interpretivist

## Implications

### Paradigmatic

**What are the possibilities along each of these continua?**

**What are the relationships between the various points on each continua?**

**What constitutes "research" in institutions of higher education?**

**What constitutes a "contribution"to the "body of knowledge?"**

**What will research from these various paradigms look like?**

**How will we judge "good" research?**

**What are the roles of committee members in each of these paradigms?**

**What will "count" as research in faculty review processes?**

**What are the ethical responsibilities of the researcher, committees, universities? How do we meet those responsibilities?**

**COMPARISON OF**

**QUALITATIVE AND**

**QUANTITATIVE**

**RESEARCH**

| Quantitative Characteristics | Qualitative Characteristics |
|---|---|
| hard science | soft science |
| focus: concise and narrow | focus: complex and broad |
| reductionistic | holistic |
| objective | subjective |
| reasoning: logistic, deductive | reasoning: dialectic, inductive |
| basis of knowing: cause and effect relationships | basis of knowing: meaning, discovery |
| test theory | develops theory |
| control shared interpretation | |
| instruments | communication and observation |
| basic element of analysis: numbers | basic element of analysis: words |
| statistical analysis | individual interpretation |
| generalization | uniqueness |
| variables | themes |
| Types--quantitative | Types--qualitative |
| descriptive | phenomenology |
| correlational | grounded theory |
| quasi-experimental | ethnographic |
| experimental | historical |

Analysis of Qualitative Symposium: Session One
Dr. Dale Shaw and Dr. Judy Richter

The following analysis was based on documents heretofore referred to as "group notes." These group notes were products of an assemblage of students and/or educators in response to encouragement and recommendations by the Symposium leaders to record the small group discussions. The students and educators were from a variety of academic disciplines and presumably had widely varying levels of experience with qualitative research. There were no pre-identified rules to follow throughout the note-taking process. A series of contemplative statements/questions were included in individuals' Symposium packets. However, the Symposium leaders stated these statements/questions may or may not be the focus of discussion but were described as points on which to ponder as desired or if needed to fuel small group conversation. The notes were likely most meaningful to the groups by whom they were developed.

An important feature of these group notes was that while there exists a physical representation of what may or may not have been said during the group discussion, the context is not necessarily physically attached to the product (Holder, 1994). Therefore, there was a risk that the interpretations of these group notes will differ from the original production. The attempt here was to interpret the group notes in relation to the proposed context in which they were developed.

This form of material analysis can be considered informal. The formality of a document or text relates to the written parts of speech that are understood and/or defined in advance (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994). In the present analysis, a compilation of "group notes" was reviewed for the purpose of generating an overall flavor of the discussions that occurred during the first installment of the Qualitative Symposium.

There were ten discernible sets of group notes that were reviewed. Of those ten sets, three sets responded to at least some of the questions as encouraged by the Symposium leaders.

These three sets of group notes appear to have been more readily able to identify with the polar-ends of the various continua, and less so for the issues along the middle portions of the continua. Examples of notes reflecting discussion of the polar-ends of the continua included the distinctions between realists and relativists, quantitative and qualitative research, discovery and proof, and nonmothetic and verstehen. One set of group notes specifically responded to the questions only. No recognizable notes on tangential issues were recorded in this particular set of notes.

Predominantly, it appeared as if participants attempted to try to come back to the questions issued at the outset of the whole-group discussion. However, some group notes reflected the pondering of practical, utilitarian, and/or even philosophical issues. These queries appeared to be difficult in which to respond as evidenced by the note-takers' writing of question marks and/or ellipsis after such queries. These abstractions were neither necessarily qualitative nor quantitative in nature, but "what if?" or "how?" Examples included: "How do we know a piece of research is ethical?" "What do we do with research if it is not generalizable?" "Now what?" and "What if these issues do not fall on a continuum?" It was posited that these questions may have been put forth due at least in part to the lack of sophisticated knowledge of qualitative issues of members of the audience.

## REFERENCES

Hodder, I. (1994). The interpretation of documents and material culture. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds), Handbook of Qualitative Research (pp. 393-402). CA: Sage Publications.

Manning, P. K. & Cullum-Swan, B. (1994) Narrative, content, and semiotic analysis. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds), Handbook of Qualitative Research (pp. 463-477), CA: Sage Publications.

Seminar Session #2

# Interpretive Anthropology and Applied Research:

# The Case in Education

Margaret Eisenhart

University of Colorado, Boulder

Invited Presentation in the Qualitative Research Seminar Series of the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO, October 30, 1998.

## I. Introduction

A. The first session in this series, very ably facilitated by Diane Schnelker in September, drew our attention to two things: **first**, to the differences between positivist and interpretive approaches to research, and **second,** to some of the issues in gaining acceptance for "non-positivist" research in higher education.

B. I want to continue the series by moving beyond the kind of debate that pits positivism *against* interpretivism, or quantitative *against* qualitative research. In my mind, these 'either/or' debates aren't very productive, especially for applied, or "practice-oriented," researchers. Practice-oriented researchers--whether in education, social work, nursing, counseling, or whatever--must be able to address important social problems by using the most appropriate and widest range of research tools available. Policy and practice decisions of consequence do not stop while scholar's debate theoretical fine points.

C. In my mind, the value of new and different research approaches is not in choosing one of them, but in their ability to expand or enrich understanding of the social problems with which we grapple as applied researchers. The emergence of new approaches should be thought of more like *an evolution than a revolution;* more like "paradigm expansion" than "paradigm shift" (see also Steven Weinberg's revisionist comments on Kuhn's use of "paradigm," in *The New York Review of Books*, October 8, 1998, p. 50). This is because new research approaches and tools enable us to 'think things and 'see things' we have not thought about, or seen in just that way, before. They make us more "versatile" as researchers than we were before. They do *not* make us forget, nor should they, what we thought and saw before.

D. Having said this, however, I do not mean to imply that all research approaches and tools are equally valuable for all purposes, nor that 'anything goes' in the conduct of research.

E. What I will try to do today is to convince you of the legitimacy, value, and standards of interpretive research.

1. I'll begin with a brief introduction to Interpretive Anthropology: How it developed in the 1970s, and how the quality of its research has been judged.

2. Then, I'll turn to more reeent developments in anthropology and to so-called "qualitative research" in the field of Education.

F. As I prepared this talk, I came to the rather astonishing realization that I have *lived* the history of *both* interpretive thought in anthropology *and* qualitative research in the field of education. I was in graduate school in anthropology during the 1970s, when Clifford Geertz's "interpretive anthropology" emerged as a hot topic. In the early 1980s, I was a brand new assistant professor in Education, worrying about tenure, when qualitative research first appeared in any significant sense in Education. These two areas of research have grown with me and are intertwined in the kind of researcher I have become. Some strange things have happened to me along the way, but for the most part, the journey has been very exciting and rewarding.

## II. Interpretive Anthropology

A. For those of you unfamiliar with interpretive anthropology, the descriptor itself dates from 1973, when the well-known anthropologist Clifford Geertz took the position that "culture" was not best conceptualized as patterns in the traditions and lifeways of a group (the older, most common definition of culture) (Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books, 1973). Rather, Geertz argued, culture should be understood as conceptual "webs of significance" groups themselves spin. Geertz' position was derived from late 19th century German intellectuals, notably Wilheim Dilthey (1883, 1914; see also Frederick Erickson, "Qualitative methods of research on teaching" in M. Wittrock (Ed.), *The Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Third Edition, pp. 119-161). New York: Macmillan, 1986). Their defining conceptual insight was that the research approach of physical and natural science (i.e., the positivist, scientific approach) was not valid for a full understanding of people, because unlike the action of atoms, planets, or plants, human action consists of symbols expressing layers of meaning. To understand people's actions, researchers would have to study not only patterns of behavior but also the sense people make of one another in their social arrangements (paraphrased from Erickson, 1986, p. 123 [cite above]). Social facts are always relative to a particular symbol scheme. Important social thinkers such as Karl Marx , Max Weber, Bronislaw Malinowski, and Margaret Mead, as well as Geertz, were deeply influenced by this conceptual insight.

B. "Webs of significance" establish and maintain what is meaningful about life for a group of people. For example, webs do things like distinguish an eye twitch from a wink, a set of chords from a symphony, or a child who is a discipline problem from a child who is expressing creativity. Characteristic patterns of behavior are not irrelevant to identifying culture, but culture itself consists of categories of meaning.

1. The "culture of romance" that Dorothy Holland and I describe in our book, Educated in Romance (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990) can be considered an example of a "web of significance."[1] The culture of romance is a conceptual model of intimate

[1] Later uses of interpretive insights, such as the examples I cite from my own work, often take webs of significance to be *mediators* of social relations, rather than to be (primarily) "vehicles of culture"--symbols that represent culture to individuals and groups--as Geertz would have it. Thus, in recent anthropological work, concepts such as expressive symbols, cultural models, folk models of success, cultural productions, and social identities--all viewed as mediators--owe a debt to Geertz' interpretive anthropology but also move beyond it.

male/female relationships--a model that we found could make sense of many of the actions and choices of the college women we studied. The model consists of a taken-for-granted, or prototypic, scenario of how male/female relationships on campus are supposed to proceed. The model does not dictate relationships, but they are understood and evaluated in light of it. According to this model, a man and woman of roughly equal looks and prestige are attracted to one another. The man appreciates the woman's special qualities and shows his affection by treating her well--that is: by being responsive to her feelings, giving her nice things, taking her nice places, and so forth. She in turn shows her interest and affection by allowing the relationship to become more intimate.

Bad treatment from the man implies that the woman is not judged very attractive, relative to the man. Unattractive women cannot expect good treatment. If an unattractive woman is interested in an attractive man, it is expected that she will have to allow more intimacy *without* being treated very well. If the man is not considered attractive relative to the woman, then she can expect very good treatment but need not put up with a lot of demands from him.

In Educated in Romance, we argue that this underlying, cultural model of romantic relationships can account for many of the women's everyday actions and choices on campus. It can provide this 'account,' because it can make sense of behaviors that otherwise seem confused, illogical, or incoherent.

2. In my new book, Women's Science, with Liza Finkel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), we describe another cultural model. Although we discuss it in somewhat different terms in the book, we could call this one a "model of gender in science." This model consists of a prototypic scenario of what science is like and what work in science demands of women and men. First, according to the model, science itself is gender neutral. However, the practice of high-prestige science--in laboratories and research departments--favors men. Among women at least, alternative places for practicing science--such as in environmental agencies or political action groups--are thought to treat women and men more equally. Women who wish to pursue and succeed in science are free to do so, but their choice is between high-prestige practices of science which favor men, and lower-prestige practices of science which do not favor men. Regardless of the choice made, however, women are expected to exchange their prerogatives, preferences, and concerns as women for the opportunity to succeed in science. For men, it is expected that they will *use, not* abandon, their prerogatives, preferences, and concerns as men to succeed in science. As with the culture of romance, this model leads women to pay a bigger personal price for prestige and status than men do.

C. In Geertz' interpretive view, the job of the anthropologist was to be an *interpreter* of other people's webs of significance. Interpretive anthropologists were supposed to construct their own interpretations of other people's interpretations. Given this purpose, interpretive ethnographers relied on methods of personal involvement with their subjects--like long-term participation and observation (to collect data); and some form of "hermeneutics" (to analyze it). There are many different hermeneutic strategies (to go into them would take another whole talk), but all of them concern ways to convince readers that (a) something seen or expressed in the data is initially puzzling; (b) but a particular interpretation or "reading" of the data clears up, or accounts for, the puzzle. Interpretive ethnographers self-consciously relied on their own subjectivity, and that of their subjects and readers, to collect and analyze their data. In consequence, the famed distinction between theory and fact, so central to positivist methodology, was flagrantly disputed and violated by interpretive researchers.

a) Positivists had argued those logical theories and empirical facts were independent of each other, and thus, facts, if properly handled through the removal of researcher or subject bias, could provide a "true" test of a theory. Hence positivist methodologists' precautions to eliminate subjective bias in research studies.

b) Interpretivists countered that a researcher can never know what has been "found" empirically unless he or she knows how to interpret (or "theorize") it, e.g., you cannot know whether someone should be counted as "married" unless you know what it means to be married; you cannot know what is to be counted as an "educated person" unless you know what it means to be an "educated person." So, what you see or measure as a researcher is always influenced by how you look. There is no theory-fact distinction as the positivists would have it.

1. Rejecting the theory-fact distinction did not mean, however, that no standards existed for the quality of interpretive research. Standards of quality include both "internal" considerations (i.e., regarding the study design itself) and "external" considerations (i.e., regarding generalizations beyond the particular study).

a) Internal requirements included evidence of: long-term stay; close, trustful, and wide-ranging relationships between researcher and subjects; adherence to hermeneutic principles; strong and detailed empirical support for interpretations; and subjects' and readers' confirmation that the researcher's interpretations were plausible.

b) External requirements include evidence of: "delicate coherence" (how well interpretations permit delicate distinctions in meaning *and* achieve a coherent account overall), *and* low-inference generalizations (how well interpretations made in one context can be applied to make sense of actions and statements in another context). For example, a researcher might suggest how well an interpretation of what it means for women to "do science" in one group can be used to make sense of the actions and statements involving science in another, different group.

## III. My Professional Trajectory

A. I became an assistant professor and then a tenured associate professor in the College of Education (at Virginia Tech) during the 1980s, as interest in and questions about interpretivism in anthropology and "qualitative research" in education grew.

B. In the 1990s, I went up for tenure a second time after moving to the University of Colorado; then I became a full professor, a part-time administrator, and a rather aged sounding 'senior member' of the faculty.

C. During the span of my professional career, a lot has happened in both interpretive anthropology and qualitative research in education.

D. In the 1970s, discussion in both Anthropology and Education focused on: What exactly was this new contender--interpretivism in the case of Anthropology, and qualitative research in the case of Education? Researchers debated their advantages (and disadvantages) compared to conventional approaches.

1. In anthropology, the interpretive approach found a place in mainstream anthropological thinking, although it did not replace older approaches or prevent the development of new ones. Some older approaches were revised to include interpretive aspects (e.g., the work of John Ogbu), and many newer approaches (e.g., feminist ethnography) were built on interpretive insights. Interpretive research continues to be an important strand in anthropological scholarship.

2. In the philosophy of science, the interpretivists won the debate with positivists over epistemology. In short, positivists had to concede the interpretive point those observations and data are not theory-neutral or objective, but are always theory- or value-laden. Positivists had to admit that empirical data cannot provide an unequivocal, objective test of logical theories, as logical positivism would have it (for a more detailed account, see Ken Howe and Margaret Eisenhart, "Standards for Qualitative (and Quantitative) Research: A Prolegomenon," *Educational Researcher*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 2-9, 1990).

3. In Education, many researchers became increasingly disillusioned with the power of experimental, survey, and statistical research to positively affect educational practice. They were intrigued with the possibility that qualitative methods might offer more.

E. During the 1980s, discussion in both anthropology and educational research focused on methods. Researchers debated: How should interpretive or qualitative studies be done? How should data be collected, analyzed, and written up? How should findings and conclusions be evaluated?

1. In Anthropology, interpretive researchers further developed their ideas, mainly by talking and writing more about their methods of gathering their data, processing their data, and writing about what they learned (see for example, Roger Sanjek's *Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990).

2. In Education, qualitative researchers, relying heavily on methods and procedures used earlier in anthropology and fieldwork sociology, won the debate over standards for "validity." Quantitative researchers had to concede that research "validity"--or the trustworthiness of inferences drawn from data--depends on research purposes. Put another way, judgments about whether you are studying what you think you are studying depend on what you think you are studying. If you think you are measuring "self-esteem," then judgments of validity depend on how well you follow agreed-upon conventions for measuring self-esteem. If you are trying to interpret culture, then judgments of validity depend on how well you follow agreed-upon conventions for interpreting culture. To the extent that different theoretical and methodological conventions pertain to studies of "self-esteem" vs. "culture," then what makes each study valid will also differ. One universal measure of research validity will not do for all (for a more detailed account, see Margaret Eisenhart and Ken Howe, "Validity in Educational Research," in M. LeCompte, W. Millroy, & J. Preissle (Eds., *The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education* (pp. 643-680). San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1992).

F. In the 1990s, discussion has focused on two things: First, the proliferation of interpretive and other nonpositivist approaches and methods; and second, more questions about standards of quality--particularly about *how* to provide clear and adequate justification for nonpositivist research methods, findings, and conclusions.

1. Regarding proliferation: In educational research and anthropology, we now have proposals and some examples of many nonpositivist research designs--critical ethnography, feminist ethnography, postmodern ethnography, narrative inquiry, collaborative inquiry, critical self-reflection, teacher action research, to name some.

2. Regarding standards of quality, it seems that the neo-positivists--those who accept the limitations of positivism but continue to view it as *one* legitimate and important approach to research--have won the debate over "accountability." Nonpositivists have had to concede the neo-positivist point that: regardless of how many alternative approaches there are, to be taken seriously in policy and practice debates, researchers must be able to provide clear and adequate justification for their methods, findings, and conclusions. It is *not* the case that 'anything goes' in, or as, interpretive educational research.

   a) At present, it seems that questions about standards for nonpositivist research are reaching crisis proportions. Several weeks ago (October, 1998) in Washington, DC, representatives of a prestigious educational funding agency declared that the agency would no longer fund any research that was not "rigorous and reliable."

   b) At the annual meeting of educational researchers--the American Educational Research Association, there has recently been a backlash against nonpositivist and qualitative research. Neo-positivist experimental and quantitative researchers have complained that more than 50% of the sessions feature "qualitative research," thereby pushing out and discriminating against what they call "rigorous" quantitative research.

   c) In my own School of Education, when I first arrived 10 years ago as the only qualitative researcher, only 5 or 6 of nearly 100 Ph.D. students were using nonpositivist or qualitative designs for their dissertation research. Now, only about 10 of our 70 Ph.D. students are using experimental or quantitative designs for their dissertations. This imbalance has raised some questions about our commitment to "rigorous methods" and "broad training" in research design.

3. I'd like to end the formal part of my presentation by making a plea for more attention to standards of quality for interpretive and other nonpositivist research studies. Given that the neo-positivists have won the debate over accountability, interpretivists need to 'get serious' about the standards of quality that should be applied to interpretive research. What is 'clear and adequate justification' for the quality of interpretive research? At the most general level, four standards seem necessary and appropriate (and as I have written elsewhere, with Ken Howe in *Educational Researcher,* 1990 [cite above], general standards like these seem applicable to forms of research--both positivist and not, both qualitative and quantitative).

4. External Value: It is incumbent on researchers to make clear why a particular research study is worthwhile. Saying that a study has not been done before does not make it worthwhile. Worthwhile studies are those which have a reasonable likelihood of contributing something important to the field.

5. Internal Value: It is incumbent on researchers of humans to demonstrate that every effort has been made to treat subjects ethically or fairly. Especially relevant are considerations of whether the quality of the data that can be collected outweighs risks to human rights' principles of informed consent, confidentiality, and privacy.

6. Methodological Detail: It is incumbent on researchers to describe, clearly and in detail, their procedures for gathering, processing, and writing about their data. Readers must be able to understand what was done as data collection and data analysis, with whom, and why.

7. Empirical Detail: It is incumbent on researchers to provide substantial, detailed empirical evidence for their findings (interpretations). This may be done with, for example, summary accounts of how *all* available evidence is consistent with one or more interpretation; a statistical analysis of central tendencies in the available evidence; or a discussion of "negative cases"–that evidence which does not fit the interpretation.

G. These standards are very general, but I see no reason why all of us can't begin with them as guidelines, and then move downward from them to use more specific standards regarding a study's particular methods, such as interviews, observations, experiments, surveys, life histories, and so forth--all of which already have large bodies of literature associated with them.

H. We should also be alert to new methods or new ideas about methods that allow us to understand new things. But being alert to new ideas and methods does not mean that we should shrink from criticizing research that does not provide some "clear and adequate justification" for itself.

IV. In my view, it's *very important* that interpretive and other nonpositivist researchers have a presence in applied social research of the 21st century. We are interested in, concerned about, and know how to study undeniable aspects of human life which positivists, even neo-positivists, are either not concerned about or not prepared to study. But, if nonpositivists don't want to be left behind in the work ahead to address important social problems through research, then we had better 'get beyond,' or as my colleague Ken Howe likes to say, "get over" the positivist-interpretivist, or the quantitative-qualitative, debate. We'd better 'get on' to ways of using our approaches and tools, in conjunction with others, in the best way we know how, with the most thoughtful justifications we can muster, to address the serious social issues we face.

* * * * * * *

The talk was followed by a period of small group discussion. The questions that oriented that small group discussions were:

1. In your field, what is a significant and timely research issue which has not been well-researched using conventional research approaches or methods?

2. What new kinds of information (new data) would be important to gather in a research study of this issue?

3. What could an interpretive research design contribute?

4. What could qualitative methods contribute?

5. Given your answers to #1-4, how might you develop a "clear and adequate justification" for this study?

Session #3
SLIDES

USING PHOTOGRAPHS AS
QUALITATIVE DATA TO
PROMOTE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE:
AN INTERPRETIVIST VIEW

Dr. James Banning, PhD, Colorado State University

INTERPRETIVISM
(Relativistic)

There are multiple, intangible realities that can be studied holistically. The aim of the research is to understand the "social construction/understanding" of the multiple realities.

Adapted: Diane Schnelker, 1998

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Interpretivism

"social reality is viewed as significantly socially constructed, "base on a constant process of interpretation and reinterpretation of the intentional meaningful behavior of people-including researchers..." (Smith, 1989)

Interpretivism

"Reality resides neither with the objective external world nor with the subjective mind of the knower, but within dynamic transactions between the two"
Barone (1992)

**********

Interpretive Anthropology

An interpretive theory of culture. Geertz (1973) argues that the way in which meanings are constituted in a culture must be read or interpreted by the ethnographer. Cultural artifacts "store" meaning.

Historical Roots of
Photographic Data:

Visual Anthropology
Visual Sociology

Documentary Photography

Visual Anthropology

Using photography to provide
visual information about culture
(ethnographic roots)

Visual Sociology

Using photography to provide
visual information about
"Social life/Social institutions"
(social action roots)

**********

Uses of Photographic Data:
1. Photo Elicitation
2. Presentation of Data
3. Participant's Archival Photos
4. Participant's Photographic Behavior

Participatory Action Research
1. Community identification of problem?
2. Goal to improve the lives of the oppressed?
3. Power and participation of the community?
4. Will the participants benefit?
5. Is there a peer relationship?

**********

Community-Based Participatory
Action Research
"...provides a model for enacting
local, action-oriented approaches to
inquiry, applying small-scale
theorizing to specific problems in
specific situations (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994)"
From: Stringer, E. T. Action Research

A Basic Action Research Routine:
1. Gather data
2. Define and describe
3. Explore and analyze
4. Interpret and explain
5. Action (plan, implement, and evaluate)
Adapted: Stringer, E. T. Action Research

**********

Inductive Reasoning: Ideas come from the accumulation of observations

Deductive Reasoning: Observations are use to confirm ideas

Abductive Reasoning: Going from observation to ideas outside the observation -- a repeated interaction of observations and ideas, of new observations, former findings and observation, et.

Ideas Outside the Observation:

Gray, Elizabeth (1982) Patriarchy as a conceptual trap.

Matrix, (1984) Making Space: Woman and the man-made environment.

Schaef, Ann-Wilson, (1985) Women's Reality

Seminar Session #3

"Proceedings of Qualitative Research Seminar Series Presentation by James Banning, Colorado State University"
Dr. Lawrence M. Lesser and Dr. Kathleen Fahey, University of Northern Colorado

Using Photographs as Qualitative Data to Promote Organizational Change: An Interpretivist View

The seminar series, as the press release states, is "designed to generate dialogue about what it means to do research from each of various emerging qualitative research paradigms." The first two seminars (an overview of the paradigms and a talk on postpositivist research) set the stage for "Using Photographs as Qualitative Data to Promote Organizational Change: An Interpretivist View" on November 13, 1998 at 4:30 at the University of Northern Colorado, facilitated by Dr. James Banning (from Colorado State University).

The paradigm loosely ascribed to James Banning is interpretivism, which he defined in a slide as holistic research that aims to understand the social construction/understanding of multiple intangible realities. He also described it as the construction of other people's constructions. It was noted that because Banning is involved in organizational change, however, his "interpretivist work" arguably moves towards a constructivist paradigm. Banning's opening remarks included a discussion of action research (including participatory action research and community-based participatory action research) that seeks to improve and empower the lives of the marginalized or oppressed.

In 1973, Banning helped create a field of study known as campus ecology, which studies the relationships among people and the campus environment. Banning's recent work uses the methodology of visual anthropology (as well as visual sociology and documentary photography) to analyze the communication of various physical features (e.g., buildings and signs) of the environment to its inhabitants. He is often hired as a consultant by schools and businesses to provide feedback about their environments.

Several of the assigned readings (e.g., Banning 1992, Banning 1996, and Banning & McKelfresh 1998) made available for attendees included photos of artifacts, some of which (especially Banning 1992) appeared as slides in the talk. Other readings (e.g., Banning & Bartels 1997; Banning 1997) served to give an overview of the dimensions and categories involved in assessing the culture or environment of a campus. Also included in the readings was an article (Smith 1983) exploring the interpretivist paradigm as well as an interpretivist study (Whitt 1991).

Given Banning's methodology, it seems appropriate to describe the physical environment of the talk. It was held in Centennial Hall, an older banquet-style long rectangular room with vaulted ceiling, wrought-iron chandeliers, tall windows, carpet, wood paneling, a fireplace (above which had the inscription: "Whoso would kindle another must himself glow") and filled with circular 8-person tables. Roughly 60 people attended, just enough to make the room appear full.

Dr. Diane Schnelker (of Kent State University) introduced Dr. Banning, who then spent the first thirty minutes discussing overhead transparencies that discussed the definition, origins and uses of interpretivism, interpretive anthropology, visual anthropology photographic data, action research and types of reasoning (e.g., inductive, deductive and abductive). Banning's handout

for the audience consisted of a bibliography of photographic data references, broken into "general" and "applied" sections.

The next ninety minutes featured a presentation of slides, with questions asked from audience along the way. There seemed to be two distinct types of slides he showed: general photographs taken as a hired consultant and photographs he took as an action researcher (advocate for minority interests). While he made it a point to disclose his status as a member of most dominant groups (white, male, heterosexual, able-bodied, etc.), he chose to focus on four categories: gender, physical disability, sexual orientation and racism/ethnicity. In particular, he examined messages of diversity related to belonging, safety, equity, and roles, and made interpretations as overtly positive, subtlety positive, neutral, subtlely negative and overtly negative.

The following are highlights of the examples Lesser and Fahey remember about these four categories of slides:

slides about ethnicity/racism:
*Caucasian, Mexican and Native American males in mural panels in which the minorities were farmers, bakers and basket weavers, the whites were in traditionally dominant roles such as scientists with microscopes, and in final picture had one of each, but white man was in the center, the only one with eyes and the others a step behind holding his hands and their hands held in such a way that if the white man took a step forward, the others would be turned around; Banning noted that to build or modify buildings on campus, permission or money was needed from groups that are mostly white males.

slides about physical disability
* a meeting room for a prison group was held with a three-quarter circle of folding chairs facing a former gas chamber--this was all the more poignant when it was revealed that the group assigned to this room was an HIV Support Group
* a staircase to a second floor area with no ramp, elevator or even sign of how a wheelchair-bound individual might access that second floor (later debriefing revealed that a sign had been there, but removed, thus, underscoring the importance of investigating first impressions)
* posts to keep out bicycles also prevented wheelchairs
* a bookcase of advising handouts, the top 3 shelves of which would clearly be out of reach for a wheelchair bound student
* phone--a TDD (telecommunication device for the deaf) phone low on the wall versus a high-on-the-wall non-TDD phone

slides about sexual orientation

* a university residence hall featured a poster on "a thousand ways to love," all of which were heterosexual
* in a university's theater department (but not in other departments of the University), men's bathroom stalls had half doors
* a motel sign said "two gays in room" for a day before someone changed it
*smashed car for alcohol awareness with chalk graffiti in front he was gay, implying that the driver's sexual orientation rather than alcohol was somehow the cause or justification of the accident

slides about gender
* at an elementary school, the character on door to a boys' bathroom was outgoing with full face view, while character on door to the nearby girls' bathroom was apron-clad girl with downcast eyes
* on a high school mural, women are in the background as cheerleaders, while males are in the foreground as athletes and scholars
* on the side of a library (at a "major university in the northwest"), there is a large male figure with book in his hand and some people would say that a page is turned every time a virgin walks by (Banning 1992)
*at this same university, there is a "men working" sign (banning 1992) (Banning relayed a response from a female professor there that men must need to announce that they are working)
* most statues showed males standing and females sitting (Banning 1992); the statues of women were sometimes defaced
* grate on stairs made it awkward for women in high heels or dresses (Banning 1992)

Although discussion had been occurring throughout the slides portion of the presentation, there was quite a bit of additional discussion at the end as well. Banning was asked how administrators received his observations, such as the gender-biased bathroom doors, and he replied that it is not particularly well-received. Banning was also asked if offending artifacts should automatically be removed and his response was to leave them there, but to mark them and add more welcoming ones to them. A participant brought up an example of a university mathematics department displaying a large "mural-style" timeline poster "Men of Mathematics" just outside the department office. This same participant also asked Banning if he had investigated diversity along religious lines as well (Banning had not, but felt it would also be worthwhile), offering examples such as a small town synagogue having no sign (Banning's comment was that the absence of an artifact is still an artifact) and a Gulf War memorial in a park in this same town mentioning all nations threatened except Israel and having crosses by all soldiers (Christian or not) who died in action. Banning commented on the environment of the room in which he was speaking, noting that the inscription above the fireplace did not have gender-inclusive language. "Real eyes realize real lies" was a phrase Banning shared to emphasize the interpretive process that individuals engage in.

Banning described a typical project as having him spend a day on campus taking pictures, showing them the next day to a wide group of stakeholders (campus or other setting) and letting them do most of the interpretation. He said one area he'd like to move towards is simply giving participants cameras and letting them take pictures. Specifically, participants might be given a

green camera to take pictures of any image that is a turn-on or welcoming and a red camera for one that is not.

Shortly after the presentation, the authors solicited additional perspectives from those in attendance via the UNC qualitative research electronic discussion forum and received feedback from Dr. Diane Schnelker. Schnelker (1998) describes Banning's alternative view of research as "one that seeks to provide a vicarious experience to readers rather than establish or confirm nomothetic principles. Pictures provided a powerful vehicle to draw the participants into the lives of various marginalized groups." She also raised the question about "whether this was a 'legitimate' form of research? If it is, how do we discern 'good' research from 'bad'? What would this kind of research look like (e.g., does a slide show constitute a dissertation? What about a video documentary, a book, a poem, a piece of music, etc.?)? What policies and procedures do we need to have in place to support this kind of research?"

References:

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Banning, James H. (1996). Bumper Sticker Ethnography: Another Way to View the Campus. Ecology. The Campus Ecologist, 14(3), 1-4.

Banning, James H. & Bartels, Sharon. (1997). A Taxonomy: Campus Physical Artifacts as communicators of Campus Multiculturalism. NASPA Journal 35(1), 29-37.

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Seminar Series #4

**Cooperative Inquiry: Research from an Emic Perspective**
**Linda Daniel, R.N., Ph.D.**

**Proceedings from the Qualitative Research Seminar Series: Constructivist Paradigm**
**Stuart Omdal, Ph.D.**

"Knowledge is constructions about which there is relative consensus among those competent to interpret the substance of the construction." (Guba & Lincoln, 1994)

In her interest to understand the experiences of women who had heart disease, Dr. Daniel selected the constructivism research paradigm. In this paradigm a researcher collaborates with subjects (participants) to investigate and construct understanding of phenomena of interest. Researcher and participants are involved in the data collection, interpretation and are affected by the investigation process. This paradigm operates under the concept that personal experience provides knowledge about being human and that we, as humans, are bound to our humanity and our environment.

Dr. Daniel noted that heart disease is the number one cause of death in American women. However, all of the medical research is based on male studies, male anatomy, and male results. Her research was driven by three questions: (a) What is the lived experience of being a woman with heart disease? (b) What methods do women use to describe their disease? (c) How do we co-create knowledge about heart disease?

Eight women who were recuperating from heart attacks participated in the study. The defining features of the methodology include: (a) The participants were equal and fully involved – the researcher and research are the same, therefore the researcher cannot get outside the human condition in order to study it (b) all participants were fully involved as co-researchers in all research decisions, (c) there is a dialectic between reflection and action which eventually creates a new meaning defined as abductive reasoning, (d) the entire process is informative and transformative for the participants, (e) and data analysis is constant and evolving. Daniel defined this action research method as "a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations to improve rationality and justice of their own situation."

The participants were selected by a purposive, "snowball" convenience technique. The data gathering setting was a coffee shop or conference room. The "instruments" were co-researchers and co-participants. The conversations initiated by the research were recorded by audio and videotape, described in field notes and eventually documented by transcriptions.

Data collection began with an introductory session to help the participants gain rapport with each other. The next phase included sharing experiences (storytelling) followed by one-on-one conversations, draft writing, and closure. Data analysis was

accomplished by an immersion in the data, color coding the transcriptions by category by the entire group and finally group recognition of themes. Dr. Daniel played a videotape showing the participants involved in the different phases of the research process.

The recurring themes include:

(a) Listen to your body. The women frequently stated that they knew that something was different/wrong with their bodies.

(b) Communicate with others. With the realization that something was wrong, the common experience was to report that to their doctors who usually did not prescribe the tests that would reveal the heart disease. The women later realized that if they had trusted their knowledge of their bodies and more assertively communicated that to their doctors, they would have received treatment sooner.

(c) Support – from others and for self. The participants reported that typically if the husband/father of a family needs to convalesce, the wife provides support for the family. Conversely when the woman needs to convalesce, the community has to support the family. Caretakers seldom took care of themselves.

(d) Identify and recognize your feelings. Because heart disease is generally associated with males, women sometimes do not validate their feelings regarding their experience.

(e) Listen to other's stories. It is through communicating one's experience and learning from the experiences of others that women will learn that their experiences, though unique do share many similarities with the experiences of others.

In this research inquiry, the process of combining reflection and action followed by reflection and action kept the data analysis viable. The participants experienced divergence in their interpretations of their experiences and discussions of those experiences. Co-researchers diverged over different parts of the transcribed discussions and converged over other parts of the transcriptions. This led to an authentic collaboration, an "intersubjective dialogue" where everyone's story was valid.

In the discussion that followed the presentation, Dr. Daniel fielded questions regarding generalizability, which was a common question also in the other seminars in this series. She replied that she was more concerned with the empowerment potential from this kind of study, than whether or not the conclusions are generalizable to another specific group of women. In constructivist research, the researcher is concerned with authenticity which "enlarges personal constructions, leads to improved understanding of construction of others, stimulates action, or empowers action" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). By providing complete and comprehensive description of the phenomena, the consumer of research is able to decide for herself/himself if the story told is similar to his or her story and if the conclusions can apply to his or her situation.

Her concluding thought reflected the constructivist paradigm, "The truth cannot be known. We are surrounded by mystery."

The author acknowledges the assistance of Daniel Ruehle Stephanie Taylor, and Laura Nealson in the preparation of this manuscript.

Guba, E.G., and Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In H.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (ed.) (1994). Handbook of qualitative research. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

# COOPERATIVE INQUIRY: RESEARCH FROM AN EMIC PERSPECTI VE

Notes from Linda Daniel's talk, January 29, 1999
Kathy Cochran, P.h.D.

Reason for research:

Heart disease is the #1 cause of death (500,000 per year)

Research questions:

What is the lived experience of women with heart disease?
What are the processes and outcomes of women co-creating this research?

Theoretical background:

John Heron (1996) Co-operative Inquiry Human Inquiry in Action

The knower and the known are the same
The researcher and the researched are the same
The dialectic of reflection and action together

Nature of the study:

8 women, ages 42-77, 1 African American
(they selected their own pseudonames)
10 meetings between May and October

Use of triangulation "as a means of validation"

Videotapes (very important to clarify context), audiotapes, field notes (post hoc), session notes, coding notes

She had the tapes transcribed and then created "one liners" for each person to represent each of their main points from the sessions. The irrelevant talk (e.g. about cruises) was removed and the transcriptions were always taken back to the participants. Text was corrected as they saw necessary.

Themes that emerged ("just popped right out"):

Listen to your body
Communication with others
Supporting others while being supported
Feeling identified and recognized
Statements from women with heart disease

Side question: Is this feminist research?

Validity Issues (after Heron): all dialectical dimensions

Research cycling – combining reflection and action

Convergence and Divergence

Agreement and disagreement

Authentic Collaboration – intersubjective dialog – everyone's story is valid

Wheeler & Chin (nursing research)

We do what we know and we know what we do.

Side question: Does this apply to teachers too?

Transcriptions from audiotapes were printed out double-spaced and with line numbers and a very wide right margin for notes. All participants did the data coding together and by hand (no use of computer software). The analysis took a year and a half. The co-researchers all went through transitions during the whole process.

Seminar Session #5

The Ordinariness of Diversity: A Report on Ethnographic Fieldwork
Michael James Higgins, Professor Anthropology. University of Northern Colorado.
February 26, 1999

Qualitative Research Seminar Series: Constructivist Paradigm
Kathy Carter & Ginny Helwick

"We are all just people, and if we could get beyond these historical conflicts we could begin to accept our common humanity" (H. Clinton 1996).

In an effort to understand the intersecting dynamics of gender, race and class among popular cultures of the city of Oaxaca, Mexico, Michael developed a research focus that he refers to as the ordinariness of diversity. He argued that this focus allows researchers to move away from normative assumptions of social interaction towards a view in which diversity is the ordinary reality within which the forces of gender, race, and class are composed in the actions of people's everyday lives. He spent over a decade among the various groups, which included transvestite prostitutes, female prostitutes, urban poor, discapcitados (people with disabilities), and the gay community.

The question of how one is to do ethnographic writing continues to be problematic as we move toward the end of this century. The discourse of the knowing subject or the distanced observer has been effectively decentered by what Foucault has called subjugated knowledges (Foucault 1979). In Latin America, these would be the knowledges expressed within popular cultures and classes. These have been broad alliances crossing ethnic, social, sexual, and gender boundaries (Cabezas 1988 and Garcia Canclini 1989a). Michael was struck by the expressed hope that located, situated, or positioned points of views can offer greater insights into everyday life and politics than can grand theories or master narratives. Specification or contextualization is required of both those who analyze and those who are being analyzed. A crossing of the hegemonic terrains of race, sex, gender, class, ethnicity, age, location, and occupation is needed in order to weave a critical narrative of everyday life (Karim 1996). As an ethnographer, Michael feels we can operate within these discursive domains by developing textured ethnographic portraits of how social actors compose and are composed by these currents in their everyday lives. This involves a collaborative research style that includes the actors in the process of composing these portraits. This is another part of ethnographic praxis.

Michael expertly used stories from his experiences to underscore the idea that the only thing we have in common is our diversity. He tells the stories with a professional panache. He appears to genuinely try to present the information in an objective a manner

as possible in order to increase the authenticity of his subjects' lives and experiences. He feels this is an important endeavor for a cultural anthropologist to achieve.

The discursive spaces of post-modern argumentation have been filled with arguments over the meanings, importance, and validity of the reality of difference among different social groups (Moraga 1993 and Minh-ha 1989). Various voices have proclaimed that differences are the surface expressions of historical conflicts that hide some kind of common human core. Michael was interested in the empowering outcome of his research more than a debate about what it was and if it was legitimate. Most compelling was Michael's arguments that "we are already diverse so there is no such thing as normative behaviors." He guilt on this line of thought by arguing that the discussion and focus in society should no longer be about inclusion (diversity), but about who has power and privilege, and who does not.

The group discussed his postmodern ideas, in relation to the use and acceptance of qualitative research paradigms in universities. Michael suggested (like Nike), that we "just do it." He advised that the attendees stop discussing what qualitative is or is not, and instead design a large project using an alternative research paradigm. He expertly used all of the stories to underscore the idea that the only thing we have in common is our diversity: "The ordinariness of diversity." He advocates that there is a need to be more supportive of the positions advocated by those voices concerned with the reality of subordination. As anthropologists, it is accepted that *Homo Sapiens* are all the same in terms of genetic structure and cognitive potentiality; that is the history of human evolution (Boyd and Sild 1997). However, beyond that, humans do not have anything in common but their differences; there is no general human nature to be found, nor will the deconstructing of social or cultural practices reveal some kind of common human core (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995).

Michael concluded with a large group discussion on the politics of representation, and the resulting situational navigation of society by its members in relation to their fluid identities. Hearing the various voices that make up the complex expression of diversity offers more material to what we can construct as a future. This would encourage the politics of action to move away from offering invitations of inclusion (since everyone is already present) and focus politics on dismantling the hegemonies of privilege that prevent access to material well-being for so many ordinary actors in the post-modern world. Finally, he feels that there is not a need to prioritize anyone's particular locations over someone else's, but to seek creative and radical means to struggle for a context in which the ordinariness of diversity has enough social spaces for justice and fairness for all those navigating their way through these various locations.

The author acknowledges the assistance of Vanessa Ewing, Stephanie Taylor, and Laura Nealon in the preparation of this manuscript.

Boyd, R. And Silk, J. (1997). *How Humans Evolved.* New York: Norton.
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Seminar Session #5

The Ordinariness of Diversity: A Report on Ethnographic Fieldwork
Michael James Higgins, Professor Anthropology. University of Northern Colorado.
February 26, 1999

Qualitative Research Seminar Series: Constructivist Paradigm
Kathy Carter & Ginny Helwick

"We are all just people, and if we could get beyond these historical conflicts we could begin to accept our common humanity" (H. Clinton 1996).

In an effort to understand the intersecting dynamics of gender, race and class among popular cultures of the city of Oaxaca, Mexico, Michael developed a research focus that he refers to as the ordinariness of diversity. He argued that this focus allows researchers to move away from normative assumptions of social interaction towards a view in which diversity is the ordinary reality within which the forces of gender, race, and class are composed in the actions of people's everyday lives. He spent over a decade among the various groups, which included transvestite prostitutes, female prostitutes, urban poor, discapcitados (people with disabilities), and the gay community.

The question of how one is to do ethnographic writing continues to be problematic as we move toward the end of this century. The discourse of the knowing subject or the distanced observer has been effectively decentered by what Foucault has called subjugated knowledges (Foucault 1979). In Latin America, these would be the knowledges expressed within popular cultures and classes. These have been broad alliances crossing ethnic, social, sexual, and gender boundaries (Cabezas 1988 and Garcia Canclini 1989a). Michael was struck by the expressed hope that located, situated, or positioned points of views can offer greater insights into everyday life and politics than can grand theories or master narratives. Specification or contextualization is required of both those who analyze and those who are being analyzed. A crossing of the hegemonic terrains of race, sex, gender, class, ethnicity, age, location, and occupation is needed in order to weave a critical narrative of everyday life (Karim 1996). As an ethnographer, Michael feels we can operate within these discursive domains by developing textured ethnographic portraits of how social actors compose and are composed by these currents in their everyday lives. This involves a collaborative research style that includes the actors in the process of composing these portraits. This is another part of ethnographic praxis.

Michael expertly used stories from his experiences to underscore the idea that the only thing we have in common is our diversity. He tells the stories with a professional panache. He appears to genuinely try to present the information in an objective a manner

as possible in order to increase the authenticity of his subjects' lives and experiences. He feels this is an important endeavor for a cultural anthropologist to achieve.

The discursive spaces of post-modern argumentation have been filled with arguments over the meanings, importance, and validity of the reality of difference among different social groups (Moraga 1993 and Minh-ha 1989). Various voices have proclaimed that differences are the surface expressions of historical conflicts that hide some kind of common human core. Michael was interested in the empowering outcome of his research more than a debate about what it was and if it was legitimate. Most compelling was Michael's arguments that "we are already diverse so there is no such thing as normative behaviors." He guilt on this line of thought by arguing that the discussion and focus in society should no longer be about inclusion (diversity), but about who has power and privilege, and who does not.

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Seminar Session #6

**UNC Research Symposium – Summary of Sessions with Dr. Yvonna Lincoln**

**Activity A**

Symposium activities got underway early Thursday morning with a breakfast meeting of the coordinating committee. Dr. Lincoln joined us for a discussion of factors in the university culture that constrain the conduct of qualitative dissertations. More specifically, the conversation focused on requirements for dissertation proposals, the range of expertise among committee members, human subject review boards, the preparation of students and financial resources. The general theme of the conversation was "don't let conventions get in the way of conducting good research!" A number of ideas were suggested to overcome the constraints and ultimately improve the quality of research.

Dissertation Proposals

Problem. Universities often require graduate students to submit the first three chapters (introduction, literature review, and methods) as the proposal for their dissertations. As the proposal is generally considered a "contract," major modifications of the first three chapters are discouraged once the proposal is approved. The rigidity of this requirement is inconsistent with the flexible nature of qualitative research.

Solution. While a university may have requirements, it helps to keep in mind the primary purpose of the research committee-assuring the quality of research. To do their part at the proposal hearing, committee members rarely need the first three chapters of the study. A more efficient alternative, and one that is more consistent with qualitative research, is a research prospectus. The research prospectus is a brief (generally 10-15 page) outline of the substantive elements of the student (i.e., nature of the problem, initial design, and initial methods). A concise outline, provided by the prospectus, keeps the focus of the proposal hearing on the issues for which students seek advice. Dr. Lincoln allows her students to prepare the prospectus they need for their particular project, regardless of page limitations. She then works with students to edit the prospectus down to required specifications prior to submitting it to the university.

Prospectuses provide the flexibility necessary for the conduct and write-up of good qualitative research. Initial designs and methods frequently require modification according to unanticipated conditions and circumstances experienced in the field. Prospectuses allow researchers to more accurately report their field work and data analysis as they emerged in the course of their studies. Prospectuses also provide the opportunity for researchers to review literature that relates directly to data actually obtained in the field. Obtained data are often different than researchers anticipate in the initial phases of their studies. As a result, literature reviews conducted prior to fieldwork often become irrelevant. Finally, prospectuses allow researchers to present their methodologies and findings in ways that make the most compelling argument, characteristic of qualitative research.

If students are required to notify the university of major changes to their studies, Dr. Lincoln recommends rewriting the prospectus as many times as is necessary to complete the

study. While it is advisable to notify committee members of major changes, Dr. Lincoln's experience is that this is generally not problematic. Few committee members have time to conduct a 1-1 comparison of the original prospectus and the final write-up and modifications are easily defended and consistent with qualitative research.

Range of Qualitative Expertise Among Committee Members

Problem. While interest in qualitative research has grown in the past two decades, it is still not uncommon to find a wide range of acceptance and expertise among potential committee members. Members deficient in either area (acceptance or expertise) could hinder the conduct of qualitative dissertation studies.

Solution. The nature of this problem reinforces the maxim: "Choose committee members widely!" Graduate students are advised to interview potential committee members to determine their level of expertise, interest in the project, and specific contribution to the project. Dr. Lincoln recommends using generic rather than highly technical language to describe the design and methodology.

Major professors can also assist in mediating the impact of differences in committee expertise on a dissertation committee. Dr. Lincoln, for example, uses the committee members and meetings to leverage students into positions they need to do their projects.

Human Subject Review Boards

Problem. Human Subjects Review Boards are charged with assuring that ethical treatment of participants in a study as specified in federal, state, and sometimes, institutional regulations. However, these regulations, and the forms used to document compliance, reflect a traditional, positivistic approach to research. At best, such regulations are inappropriate for qualitative research. In some cases, they may even hinder the conduct of trustworthy, ethical qualitative research.

Solution. The short-term solution to this problem is to develop an appreciation for the role of Human Subject Review Boards, become familiar with the regulations they deal with, and address their concerns in the proposal/prospectus and on requisite forms. Students should also address the special ethical issues associated with face-to-face research. The long-term solution involves working to change the regulations and/or forms. At the local level, Dr. Lincoln suggest rotating service on the review board among faculty experts in qualitative research. Such service provides the opportunity to educate other board members and maintains a qualitative presence on the board.

Collaborative Research

Problem. Institutions are moving away from strict adherents to Western forms of knowledge and toward greater acceptance of alternative forms of knowledge. No longer is there an ultimate social truth, or a single set of standards for evaluating truths. Multiple perspectives

are valued. Collaborative research is encouraged, at least among faculty. How can the academy foster collaboration among graduate students/ What are the implications of collaboration for dissertation and other forms of research?

Solution. Solutions to this problem require finding or creating opportunities to network with others. The interdisciplinary nature of qualitative research lends itself to developing relationships with faculty and students in other disciplines that use qualitative traditions (e.g., coniology, communication studies, history, anthropology). Students are encouraged to take courses in these areas. Faculty (and students) can also look for colleagues with similar research interests across disciplines. Experience with other disciplines enriches students' preparation and creates opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration. Faculty can foster collaboration among students by putting people with similar interests together in study groups, for class projects, or for joint authored projects.

As the dissertation is the final requirement in fulfillment of the doctorate degree, some members of the discussion felt that students should conduct a study from start to finish, independent of other "co-researchers." Other members thought that this was inconsistent with the value of collaboration. In addition, emerging paradigms in qualitative research are founded on the notion of collaboration among all participants in all phases of a research project. Strict adherents to requiring graduate students to be the "sole researcher" may limit the paradigms graduate students may employ in their dissertation projects. As most projects result in multiple manuscripts, a possible compromise was offered. Graduate students doing collaborative dissertation projects might negotiate with their collaborators the preparation of at least two publications of the project. One publication would be the students' dissertations, a single authored publication in which the contributions of all "co-researchers" are acknowledged. A second manuscript would include the names of all collaborators as authors and would be submitted for publication.

Collaboration poses less of a dilemma for non-dissertation research. First, all co-researchers can be cited as authors. Second, multiple publications provide sufficient opportunity to rotate first-authorship among all collaborators.

Appropriate Preparation of Graduate Students

Problem. The acceptance of multiple truths as well as increased interest in qualitative research has expanded the repertoire of paradigms from which to conduct research. The diversity of approaches has implications for the preparation of graduate students. For example, should graduate students be familiar with all research approaches (i.e., be prepared as generalists); or should they specialize in one approach?

Solution. Time did not allow a thorough discussion of this intriguing question. Dr. Lincoln suggests that students with aspirations to become practitioners be familiar with a variety of research paradigms (i.e. generalists). Students who plan to join the academy would be better served by specializing in a specific approach.

Research Resources

Problem. Financial support for research continues to favor traditional, positivistic research. Not only does this result in fewer dollars available for qualitative research, it also increases competition for the limited funds that are available.

Solution. Again, time prohibited a thorough conversation of this issue. Members of the discussion were encouraged by the increase in support evidenced in the recent past. Dr. Lincoln recommended checking the Internet for requests for proposals from private companies and provided a list of foundations that support qualitative research.

Wenner-Grin Foundation of New York (funds multi-cultural, ethnographic studies)
Spencer Foundation
Lily Foundation
USDE Field Initiated Grants ($10-15,000 range)

Summary

Dr. Lincoln's presence provided the opportunity for members of the coordinating committee of the qualitative symposium to discuss a number of dilemmas they encountered in the course of conducting/facilitating qualitative dissertations. Many of these dilemmas are the result of a clash between policies and procedures based on traditional views of research inherent in the research culture of many universities, and the characteristics of current and emerging forms of qualitative research. Dr. Lincoln's insights and experience encouraged us all to find ways around the constraints while we explore avenues for modifying the culture to accommodate qualitative research. As we were only able to scratch the surface of many issues, it became evident that the rise of qualitative research has profound implications for many aspects of higher education.

**Activity B**

Unknown Question:

Just get published! Tenure committees don't read dossiers. They won't do it for people on their own faculty. The primary question they ask is: Are you the kind of person we want to live with for the rest of our lives? Learn how to play nice with others.

Are people who do qualitative research at a disadvantage when the primary criterion for tenure and promotion is the number of publications on your vitae?

No. If you are doing qualitative research and you don't have six articles you haven't thought of your audience. I am planning all the time for multiple publications. Manuscripts usually take around 18 months to publish. Keep extensive research notes. How do you talk about research? When you go up for tenure you may be asked what do you think you were doing? Faculty will read how you construct what you think you are doing. One of the worst things for young faculty is tangents. Young faculty can't afford to "just do stuff." You must talk about how you think about how the pieces fit into a puzzle. Being scattered can't do that. Tell them how to survive the professorate.

Invisible college going-run in their traps-talk to people outside. Schedule meetings with folks, with closest friends and biggest supporters at annual conferences.

Validity in Qualitative Research

This is the most painful area in professional life. The central question is can we trust the "stuff" because it will be used if it is compelling-appears to have correlation with some social/physical reality. Therefore it is important because no one will use it if it is not compelling.

Really has to do with whether others think it is good enough to take the risk to use it. There is a certain amount of risk assessment. What ever you call it, it is critical. There is no point in publishing social science if no one uses it or thinks it is fantasy.

Validity is correspondence. Rejects the strict philosophical sense. Usefulness makes more sense. There are many schema for validity: Schwandt uses a continuum with traditional notions of validity on one anchor and pragmatic criteria on the other; "crystalline validity" Laural Richardson; "schools of validity" attached to interpretivists traditions. Validity is an interesting intellectual problem--allowed me to break away from proposed parallels.

Where do you place religious perspectives with validity and knowledge?

This is problematic. It links who we are spiritually with who we are {as researchers?} Theological paradigms are different than inquiry paradigms. (Skip B.) if we use believability-religious rejection of empirical. (Y.S.) is a political question-make policy based on God. Have no credible evidence that God speaks to you and not to me. Need careful conversation of

theology before we talk about evidence. Can't verify what God said to few who said he spoke to them. Peter Reason talks of a sense of sacred that needs to be brought into the process where...

Advocacy Research Debate

Opponents argue that advocacy compromises neutrality (objectivity) ideal. Proponents argue that there is no such thing as objective social sciences. To fail to acknowledge the lack of objectivity you only hide your biases. The problem with advocacy is that it obviates the need to speak for people you don't like. Lack of objectivity and advocacy is used as a weapon against qualitative research. The only difference between the two approaches is the openness with which researchers acknowledge their biases.

Advising Students

Advice to students: be sure that your major professor is absolutely on your side and will remain there all the way through letters of recommendation. Let the major professor see the chapters one by one. Once revised, send them off to other members of the committee (on a chapter by chapter basis). Document students' process.

What do you do when you know but other members don't?

Methodologists often become de facto chairs. Decide if you are going to make the commitment to the project. It is an opportunity to teach others about naturalistic research. Until there comes a day when there is a huge cadre of qualitative researchers it will be that way. There is an opportunity to build that cadre. Approximately 85% of the faculty in the U.S. is 65. They will be gone. The candidate pool will likely contain more faculty who are better prepared in qualitative research.

What are the number of research hours required of your students?

9 credits in stat required. 12 credits (2 + 10)

Alliances between Colleges

Encouraged building alliances with faculty and students in other programs such as the women's faculty network, the humanities (cultural studies bring in new forms of discourses)

What have you done to help build alliances, expertise?

Conduct reading groups. Read a book a month and discuss over a pot luck meal. One person volunteers to guide the discussion of each book. Some of the books we have read and discussed include: Ethnography for the 21st Century, Holographic Paradigm, Building Communities of Difference, The Vulnerable Observer, Woman Writing Culture, The Sparrow, and the sequel to The Sparrow.